Genealogical Society
of Washtenaw County, Mich., Inc.

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - Founded December 17, 1857 SEPTEMBER 1990

WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS

FROM THE PRESIDENT

HOUSE MOVED, BASEMENT UNDER CONSTRUCTION, HOPE TO HAVE STABLE ON FOUNDATION BY OCTOBER

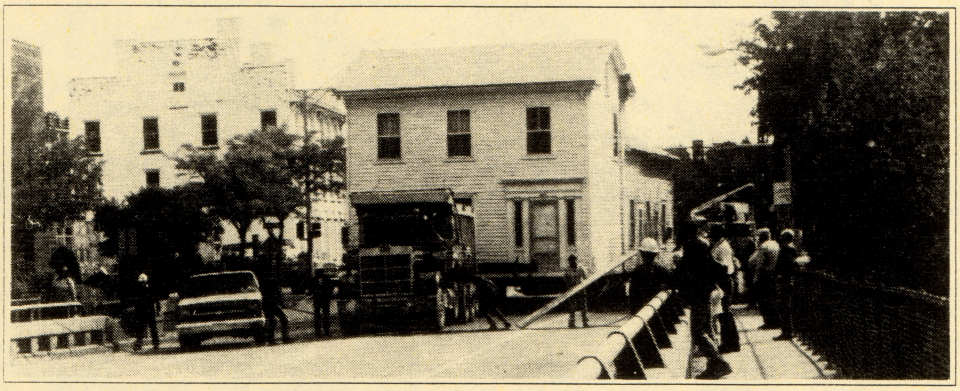


Photo courtesy of Karen O'Neal

WALL STREET HOUSE ON THE MOVE

WCHS's proposed 1837 museum starts over Broadway bridge to Main Street. At left is Ann Arbor's oldest commercial building, erected 1832. The latter now houses a St. Vincent DePaul store.

Lots of exciting things have happened since the last issue of Impressions! As you probably know if you live in the area, our house moved safely from 1015 Wall Street to 500 North Main on June 10.

Due to the best collaborative efforts of all involved, (40 - 50 people), a complicated task went very smoothly.

Utility and cable TV wires were lowered or raised, street and traffic lights disconnected, trees trimmed and traffic detoured, as a 150 year-old house was carefully put on wheels, then pulled slowly by truck to begin a new life as a museum for the Historical Society.

It will become the MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET, A museum of County Life.

The new basement is now under construction. We are planning for a dry basement for storage and work area by opting for a top-quality waterproofing system.

While the house is still "up in the air", an attempt is being made to remove the slight bow in the sides. Areas where the sill plate has rotted will be replaced with new wood. These improvements are easier to accomplish now while it is still raised on steel beams.

Watch for the house to be placed on its foundation in mid-September. Notice the list of donated services and materials elsewhere in this newsletter, and thank these people for their help. Everyone connected with this project has been enthusiastic and generous.

The bricks that originally formed the foundation for the house are hand made bricks from one of Ann Arbor's many brick works of the era. They are not a standard size.

We felt it was important to save them to face the block foundation, so that the house will have the same appearance in its new location as it did when it was originally constructed.

We plan to reclaim and reuse the original bricks, although this time they will not be a structural part of the foundation.

Now that we've begun, it is important to think about when we might finish. The transformation from private home to museum has been divided intro four parts.

First was the "move and site preparation", now complete. The second phase, where we are now, is the "stable on foundation" phase. We expect to complete this by October. Next will be "warm and secure" and "open as a museum".

If we work very hard, and if everything goes smoothly, (which, if we have learned nothing else in this past

(continued on page 6)

WCHS TO TOUR PARKER MILL SEPTEMBER 23

A tour and demonstration of the 100-plus year old Parker Mill on Geddes Road a short way east of Dixboro Road will highlight the September WCHS meeting at 2 p.m. Sunday, September 23.

Nelson Meade, president of the county parks commission from its inception in 1973 until 1987, will speak about the history, acquisition and restoration of the grist mill and the development of the county parks system. Meade is now a City Councilman.

WCHS President Karen O'Neal will also give an update on museum developments at the meeting to be held in the cider mill building, the second building on the site.

This meeting was moved to the fourth Sunday of September to avoid conflict with the Old West Side House Tour. Other WCHS meetings are usually scheduled the third Sunday.

ART FAIR PARKING NETS WCHS $1,711

Thanks to Comerica Bank for use of their parking lots downtown after hours and several volunteers, WCHS earned $1,711 parking cars at the Art Fair in July.

Pete Rocco coordinated parking and Marty Evashevski recruited volunteers by phone.

Others who helped were Rosemarion Blake, Mary Culver, Angela and Mr. Del Vecchio, Mr. and Mrs. Roger Ellsworth, Lois Foyle, Marty Evashevski, Carol Freeman, Lucille Fisher, Marguerite Harms, Nancy McKinney and Ken Mayne.

Also helping were Karen and Joe O'Neal, Pete and Kay Rocco, Grace Shackman, Ingrid Sheldon, Don Smith, Nick and Margaret Steneck, Esther Warzynski, Pauline Walters, Susan Wineberg, Alice and Lawrence Ziegler. Some worked two or more shifts.

CENTENNIAL FARMS PART OF WASHTENAW HERITAGE

On a perfect June day a bus load of WCHS tourgoers visited or saw in passing 28 centennial farms, none more than 15 miles from Ann Arbor. One is even surrounded by Ann Arbor.

Tourgoers went inside a milking parlor, an early 19th century barn and a sesquicentennial farm home. They saw an unusual windmill, lots of growing corn and even had a nip of homemade wine if they wanted it.

A centennial farm is one that has been owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more. Since the Michigan Department of State started the program in 1948, they have registered 4,573 farms, 118 of them in Washtenaw County.

The state has also certified 225 sesquicentennial farms, "16 or 17" of them in Washtenaw, a state department spokesman said.

Most certified farms display a centennial farm sign in the front yard, but not all. A centennial farm comprises only the land. Farm buildings may be new, remodeled or gone.

Some of the farms were working farms, some part-time farms in which farmers and/or spouses work off the farm, some small remnants of original acreages.

The tour was arranged and narrated by outgoing WCHS Vice-president, Lawrence Ziegler, a former Webster township farmer himself.

The first farm noted was that of Robert and Virginia Onago (brother and sister) at 2857 Packard Road east of Cobblestone Farm whose family have owned it since 1877. The circa 1834 house and centennial sign were not visible from the street but they have perennials for sale, announced by a sign.

The group saw a four-stall milking parlor on the 1827 Charles Geddes farm, 5174 Platt Road in Pittsfield Township. While it is no longer in use, tourgoers could see where the cows were brought in, four at a time, to snack on grain while milkers were attached.

The milk went into clear glass globes, then into stainless steel pipes to the cooler from which it was pumped into a tank truck for shipping.

Geddes has retired but lives on the farm and rents out the land.

Geddes had milked 90 high-producing Holsteins which often set production records. Some produced as much as 100 pounds of milk a day--over 12 gallons. Some cows would drink almost 75 gallons of water a day, Ziegler said.

Geddes' culls were better producers than average cows and sold for a good price."

William Geddes who acquired this farm in 1827 was one of three brothers who came to this area. John started a sawmill on the Huron River at Dixboro Road. Robert was the third brother.

Around the corner, Webb and Ada May Harwood greeted tourgoers at their farm at 6356 Michigan Avenue (US-12). He posed with a sign he made listing the farm's owners beginning with his great-grandfather William W. Harwood in 1834.

William W. was a founder of Ypsilanti and businessman there for several years before he traded his Ypsilanti property for 900 acres of "unimproved land" including the present farm.

William W.'s son Sidney owned it by 1864, his grandson, William S. by 1927 and Webb and his wife since 1934. They have two children, Alfred W. and Janice O. Harwood.

The Webb Harwoods used to raise 1,200 chickens, sold and delivered eggs, milked 15-20 dairy cows and made about 100 gallons of maple syrup annually.

The route passed Harwood Cemetery at Campbell and Textile Roads, the Cody-Knicely farm at 670 Textile road, in that family since 1833 though not certified, and the 1836 Sutherland-Wilson farm, 797 Textile. The Codys were related to Buffalo Bill Cody.

Wayne W. Clement's Burr Oak Stock Farm at 2515 Textile Road at the north edge of Saline has been in the family since 1886. The bus drove in past the huge burr oak that gives the farm its name.

Wayne's grandfather, William Clements, was an orphan from London, England. He worked on the Cody farm several years before buying the present farm and marrying a Finkbeiner. Wayne's father was Ferman Clements. Wayne and Jane Clements have a daughter, Penny.

Wayne, president of the Saline Historical Society, pointed out the windmill on top of a cement water tank his father built in 1925. The windmill pumped water from the well below into the tank. The water then ran by gravity to house and barn.

The original barn, built perhaps around 1850, was added to in 1898.

Clements has recently formed a

Courtesy of Seitz family

Paul F. Seitz (left) and son Eugene pose with their centennial farm sign at 475 North Fletcher Road, Dexter. Eugene's great-grandfather Phillip Seitz acquired the farm in 1875.

partnership to develop Brookview Highlands, a subdivision of 89 homes, on 120 of his 145 acres. He hopes income from it will let him maintain the remaining farm and buildings.

The bus continued west on Textile to Saline-Ann Arbor Road.

The Nutting Academy ran from 1847-65 on the southeast corner, across from Lodi Cemetery, Ziegler noted. "A lot of the students stayed with farmers in the vicinity and walked to the academy which no longer stands.

"In 1851 the Academy had 142 students, including some from New York, Pennsylvania and elsewhere. Ann Arbor High School didn't start until 1856."

Gerhardt Schaible, whose son David is now working the family farm at 7624 Pleasant Lake Road, was on the tour with his wife, Esther.

Gerhardt said German farmers came and bought farms from the Reverend Friedrich Schmid who took up options on land in the area. Schmid was a Lutheran and Reformed Church missionary sent here by the Basel Missionary Society in Switzerland.

Gerhardt's great-grandparents Johannes Schaible and Margaretha Reule settled on the farm in 1847. They had seven sons and one daughter. His grandparents, Jacob Schaible and Eva Maria Alber operated the farm from 1887 and had three sons and two daughters.

In 1920 his parents, Julius Schaible and Johannah Gartmann took over. Gerhardt, one of two sons, took over in 1949, and his son, David, and wife, Edith Bess Hatch, took over in 1977. They have two sons. Gerhardt and Esther have another son and six daughters.

The first home was of log, close to the stream, where the family lived about 23 years. The current brick house was built about 120 years ago.

The original barn was destroyed by fire in 1959. A long building used to be a cider mill he said. They discontinued making cider about 30 years ago.

"The building was getting old, the equipment was about worn out. I decided I'd rather milk more cows at the time," Gerhardt said.

A cousin, Charles Schaible, lives just down the road at 8005 Pleasant Lake Road. They have three children. The oldest, Christina, was born 100 years to the day after John Jacob Schaible bought the farm in 1875. Charles was chosen the dairy farmer of the year last year, Gerhardt said.

"They have quite a big dairy operation but they put cows in stalls to milk, not in a milking parlor. They have a sawmill out back which hasn't been running much lately. They farm about 315 acres," Ziegler said.

At 4441 Parker Road, Ziegler introduced Elmer Diuble who operates a farm implement and feed business there. The farm where his home and business are was taken over by his grandfather in 1872.

"I have part interest in our other farm at Diuble and Ellsworth Roads which was taken over in 1835. There was one other owner prior to that named Frank Fitzgerald," Diuble said.

"I think Fitzgerald was a speculator because he took up three or four sections in this area from the government."

Elmer said the barn near his home was built in 1856 and the house in 1928. He was born on the other farm where the barns were built in 1856 and 1858 and the house in 1875. His brother Raymond lives there. Their grandfather came from Stuttgart, Wurttemberg, Germany when he was nine years old.

Elmer's mother's family, named Wuerth, was from the same area. Elmer's great uncle owned the former Wuerth and Orpheum Theaters in Ann Arbor as well as the Pioneer High School site. Another great uncle had a furniture store in Ann Arbor.

Elmer's wife, Grace Parker Diuble, is from the 150-year-old Parker farm up the road at 501 South Parker Road. The road is named for the family. An ancestor, Russell Parker, acquired it in 1826. It came down through Russell, junior, and Homer to Stanley Parker, present owner. (It is not certified.)

The tour passed the Archie L. Bradbury farm at 9890 Easton Road. Bradbury's have 65-70 dairy cows and a milking parlor and raise Suffolk sheep.

Tourgoers were able to walk around the yard and the large barn at the Bates-Mann farmstead at 2700 North Parker Road near Dexter.

The barn looks like a 20th century building with its gambrel or "hip" roof but the hewn timbers inside attest to its early 19th century origins. The more modern roof was added after the old gable roof was destroyed in a windstorm in 1922.

Vrelon and Eunice Bates bought the farm, originally owned by Judge Samuel Dexter, in 1827. It came down through Charles and Mary and H. Carl and Ruby Bates. Harry and Bill, two of their seven children, are developing most of the farm for housing. (It is not certified)

Their nephew, John Mann, wife, June, and three children, Erin, Bret and Cory, now own the original farmstead. John is the son of Louise Bates Mann who recently retired from the University of Michigan Athletic Department ticket office after 40 years.

(Through his father, John is descended from pioneer German settler, Jonathan Henry Mann.)

In looking into the history of the Bates farm, John found in the original deed the following description to part of the farm:

"The land that may be overflowed by raising the mill pond to a certain mark on the second post counting downstream from the gates of the flume of the sawmill."

John told Ziegler his grandfather had a sawmill on Mill Creek. They have given the millstone to Dexter Historical Society.

John also told Ziegler that in cleaning up an oak tree felled in a storm, they found a flintlock rifle that, curiously, had completely grown into the trunk of the tree at the corner of Shields and Parker Roads.

The next stop was a bountiful luncheon at St. Andrew's United Church of Christ in Dexter, featuring baked chicken, salads including German potato salad and rhubarb cake.

The bus passed by St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Dexter, which is celebrating the sesquicentennial of the congregation this year, on the way to the Hoey-Sullivan sesquicentennial farm at 5253 Mast Road where visitors were invited to tour the 19th century farm home of Agnes Hoey Sullivan. The house was remodeled in 1909.

The Irish name was originally spelled "Hoy", Agnes said, until an uncle, Michael, graduated from U-M law school and went to Chicago to practice law at the turn of the century.

There were many Chinese in Chicago by then and "he wanted to be affiliated with the Germans, so he inserted an `e', making it sound a little more German. The rest of the family followed suit," she said.

Daniel Hoy first acquired the farm in 1835. It came down through Patrick and Margaret Hoy, John Hoey and Mary Alice Cullen to Agnes and the late Ed Sullivan. Their son, Christopher, has been working the farm.

One of Agnes's favorite keepsakes is her mother's first prize citation "for

being at the top of her class in spelling the most."

The original 1835 deed to the farm is framed and she has pictures and furnishings of her ancestors. An autographed friendship quilt her aunt had made and an applique picture brought admiring comments.

An unusual keepsake are the dumbbells (shaped like elongated bowling pins) that her mother used in gym class at Ypsilanti Normal (now Eastern Michigan University) in the late 1880s. Each student had to buy his own. She has never seen any in antique shops.

Agnes's mother taught school ten years before her marriage in 1899. Later Agnes went to the Normal and taught school. Her first job was at the nearby one-room Peatt School.

An old-fashioned narrow ironing board used as a display table in one bedroom was a conversation piece. An amusing mechanical toy cow bank on the mantel used to kick over the person milking when money was added.

The bus passed by the 1829 Kenny-Baldus farm, a full-time working farm operated by Donald E. and Wana Baldus at 6755 Webster Church Road.

Don is a direct descendant of Munnis Kenny, born in Vermont, who came here in 1829 from Massachusetts where he was practicing law. Here he bought 240 acres of land in what was to become Webster Township at Kenny's suggestion. He admired Daniel Webster.

The farm came down through John Kenny and Adelia Queal, Bert Kenny and Hattie Phelps to Donna Kenny Baldus, Don's mother. Don's brothers, Bill and Dave, operate nearby farms part-time and Don's uncle, Munnis Kenny, namesake of the pioneer, lives nearby. Don farms 800 acres.

The pioneer Munnis was elected first president of the Washtenaw County Historical Society in January 1858. He also started the Washtenaw Mutual Insurance Company and, as its secretary many years, he could, at first, carry all the papers in his hat.

The tour passed the 1885 Koch-Ledwidge farm at 5780 Joy Road. Present owner, William (Joe) Ledwidge, owns 80 acres and does general farming on 300 acres.

The farm came down from his great-grandfather Henry Koch through Koch's daughter, Mrs. William Ledwidge, his grandmother, and his father, also William Ledwidge.

Dorothy Beach occupies the 1864 farm at 10410 Dexter-Chelsea Road in Lima Township which she owns with her sister, Henrietta Beach Johnson of Midland, Texas.

The farm came down from Stephen Beach through William and Leigh Beach to his daughters. Leigh was a long-time member and chairman of the old Washtenaw County Board of Supervisors which preceded the present board of commissioners.

CIDER, PENNY A GALLON

The following is an advertisement from the Ann Arbor News September 18, 1934, placed by one of the centennial farms of today:

"Snow apples, cooking apples, sweet cider. Pressing cider every Tues. and Fri. From 50 gal. up at 1cent per gal. Schaible Cider Mill, Pleasant Lake Rd. Ph. 746F-22."

Schaibles no longer make cider but their cousins the Albers do.

The Beach barn, built in 1922, burned in 1929. It was rebuilt right away in the same style by the Hanselman brothers.

Ray Schairer, a retired Scio-Lima Townships farmer on the tour, said his folks had to build the same barn over again too. Their new barn was complete except for the barn doors when a cyclone (today called a tornado) struck in 1917.

The Klien-Gross farm 15620 North Lima Center Road was acquired in 1859 by ancestors of the present resident, Ella Klien Gross. The house was built in 1872 and the barn earlier.

Paul F. Seitz, 81, his wife and son, Eugene, greeted tourgoers by bringing out Paul's homemade red and white grape wines made from his own carefully tended grapes, and offered everybody a glass. There was home canned sweet cider for those who preferred it.

They also had an exhibit of pictures of farm activities and talked informally with visitors as they wandered around the yard and looked over the garden.

Paul's grandfather Phillip Seitz acquired the farm in 1875, followed by his son Fred and Fred's son Paul.

Paul harvests 30-35 bushels of grapes a year which is all made into wine. His father and he have furnished communion wine for their church (St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Chelsea) "going on near 100 years" he said.

Paul showed us his thriving butter crunch lettuce in cold frames. He plants peas on Good Friday. He thinks he gets better carrots if he plants them where the peas were the previous year.

Upon leaving, Paul said, "Come again. We'll go down in the wine cellar next time."

The bus headed south over I-94 to South Fletcher Road, passing two centennial farms--the Wilbert C. Koch farm at 595 and Ernest Wenk farm at 2833, just north of Rogers Corners at Fletcher and Waters Roads.

Jacob Koch owned the first farm 100 years ago. Wilbert Koch who lives there now is retired from the University of Michigan where he worked for years as janitor and in the University mail service.

Ernest Wenk's grandparents, Ignatz and Anna Maria Wenk, acquired 40 acres in 1859. The farm came down from Ignatz to Martin to Ernest. The name was originally Wank. Ernest now has 130 acres.

Ernest's father Martin, who started farming there in 1924, did custom grain threshing with steam threshers. Martin bought a second and then a third one as farmers switched from threshing grain stored in barns to threshing direct from the field when everybody wanted to do it at once which they can now with modern combines. They had Port Huron-made steam engines.

Wenk's buildings all had to be rebuilt after the 1917 cyclone, Ernest told Ziegler.

He recalled that his father was away. Ernest, his expectant mother, four other kids and the hired girl all huddled in one room. When it was over the buildings were all demolished except the room they were in. They felt they truly had divine protection.

The roof and steeple were blown off nearby Zion Lutheran Church. Rebuilding delayed the church's planned 50th anniversary celebration from June to September 1917.

The Huehl farm, 4100 South Fletcher Road was bought by John Huehl in 1839. Gerald and Dennis Huehl now own 333 acres, farm 500, and milk about 60 cows.

Gerald, Susan and family live on the homestead and were runner-up dairy farmers of the year in Michigan a year or two ago. Dennis is on the county soil conservation board.

In the early days, John used to walk from his farm to Ann Arbor, about 15 miles, with butter and eggs to sell. Once John walked to Chicago with a group of men, sleeping in haystacks and barns. It took seven days each way but he was able to earn some much needed cash.

The grandmother of the present owners chose to be buried on the farm where she had spent most of her life. Her husband is buried in Zion Church Cemetery at Rogers Corners.

Farms noted in passing on Waters Road were the Ernest G. Hinderer farm, 12056 Waters, Mrs. Almarine Eschelbach farm at 11516, and Neil Stierle farm at 10390.

The 1853 Hinderer farm is now rented out and the resident owner works off the farm. The Eschelbach farm came into the family in 1854 and the Stierle farm in 1848. The Eschelbach land is rented out.

Stierle raises field crops on 125 acres that he owns and 125 more he rents. He also sells select split oak fire place wood to a group of customers.

His large barn was built in 1917. A small barn and smokehouse are pre-Civil War vintage.

The Dieterle-Weidmayer farm at 10044 Pleasant Lake Road in Freedom Township is now operated by Dale E. Weidmayer who owns 255 acres and works 300. His livestock includes 75 cows, 45 sheep, some pigs and chickens. He also shears sheep.

(In past years more sheep have been raised in Washtenaw County than any other county east of the Mississippi.)

The next stop was at Bethel United Church of Christ 1513011 Bethel Church Road which is celebrating its 150th year in 1990.

Pastor Roman Reineck said the church was founded in 1840 by the missionary pastor Friedrich Schmid. The present building was started in the winter of 1909. It was dedicated December 19, 1909, free of debt with $200 in the treasury.

"It cost $12,000 and its the only church I know of where the engineer-contractor-designer, C.D. Sauer, has his name in a sandstone built right into the church wall. He must have pulled a fast one on us when we weren't looking," Pastor Reineck said.

"At the time, the people didn't want any crosses on the church. But the young whipper-snapper minister got together with the contractor and stone masons and there is a cross in the building over the west door."

The earlier small wood frame church stood just west in the cemetery. In a dry season you can see a little indentation in the ground where its foundation was, he said.

"The cemetery stones go back to the 1850s. There is an interesting stone in the cemetery that says this person died on February 31.

"The story is that the stonecutter would come out in the spring before Memorial Day to mark the tombstones with date of death of persons who had died during the fall and winter.

"There were a lot of family farms around here. They were congenial, friendly folk who liked their cider and wine. When the stonecutter came out they would visit him, talk a little, and of course, bring him a little wine or cider.

"So by the end of the day, it didn't matter to the stonecutter whether it was January or February," the pastor said in slurred tones. "It was supposed to be January," he added.

Pastor Reineck pointed out three new banners hung in the church in celebration of 150 years.

One banner depicts the three churches the congregation has occupied-a log church 1845-57, wood frame, 1857-1909, and the present stone church, 1909-present.

DOZENS OF COUSINS

Many of Washtenaw's German families are interrelated by marriage.

Gerhardt Schaible who was on the farm tour saw farms of several cousins--Charles Schaible, Elmer and Raymond Diuble and Al Alber.

A WCHS member, Margaret Haas Sias, who helped plan the tour, is deep into genealogy. She tells that she looked around at a rural meeting she attended one time and figured that she was related to all but two persons there.

After more research she found that she also was related to the other two!

"Friedrich Schmid, the missionary pastor from Basel, Switzerland, founded approximately 22 churches in these parts. Some are now Lutheran, some United Church of Christ as we are here."

The Bethel Congregation numbers 350 communicant members and has approximately 100 baptized children. The members live mostly in the immediate area and surrounding towns.

"There are approximately ten families that are fully dependent on farming. All the rest live on the land, rent land out or live on a small parcel and work in town."

He showed an old "Bible sock", cloth on the end of a long handle in which offerings used to be taken, and two chairs from the church of 1857. A display of historic pictures included some of horses and buggies lined up down the road at least a half-mile in June 1909 when the cornerstone was laid.

A second banner, focusing on the future, contains the hand prints of all the children from cradle roll through eighth grade, pink for girls, blue for boys. All handprints are signed. The third banner was made by the confirmation class.

The stained glass windows were made in Detroit. The wording under them is in German. The last German language services were held in 1955-56. English was introduced into Sunday School around 1926-28.

Electricity was put into the church in 1940, the pastor said. Before that they had a Delco Plant (home electric plant) and before that a carbide plant.

One time the minister was getting ready for evening meeting and started the carbide machine and all of a sudden there was an explosion.

No one was hurt but it bowed some of the stained glass windows. "That's why you see the jailhouse arrangement of metal bars holding the windows," Pastor Reineck said.

The congregation has had 13 pastors in its history. Pastor Reineck came in 1969.

A year ago a former minister's wife, Mrs. Baumann, sent an old book found in her husbands things. "It was the constitution and by-laws, as we would call it, written by Friedrich Schmid in old German script."

They found one member who could still read it. She transposed in into current German script writing and it was translated into English.

The bus headed west on Bethel Church Road to Alber Orchard and Cider Mill.

Nathan A. (Al) Alber said his family had been in Washtenaw County since the 1840s and at the present location 109 years. His great-great-great grandfather Matthew Alber was a founder of Bethel Church, his grandfather was

on the building committee for the stone church.

(His father, however, married a girl from Manchester and joined a church there where the family continues to attend.)

Albers run the cider business year around. They started in 1890 with horsepower. Later they used a steam engine and gasoline engine before switching to electricity in 1927. The gasoline engine was sold for scrap in World War II.

"The Edison Company was reluctant to bring power out in 1927. My grandfather had to pay $1000 a mile (1 1/2 miles) and cut the trees ahead of them to get it out here."

Al Alber and his wife live down the road from the cider mill on property his grandfather bought from Adam and Mary Gehringer (grandparents of baseball player Charley Gehringer).

They live near a small lake they call Silver Lake though on some maps it is called Freedom Lake. The nearby one-room school Alber attended through eighth grade was called Silver Lake School.

The Albers still have some old-fashioned varieties of apples in their 15 acre orchard but are having to replace with dwarf trees of newer varieties because people don't know what they are and won't buy them and migrant pickers refuse to use 20 foot ladders.

When Al began raising apples there were very few pesticide sprays. His family bought the first sprayer the year he was born--1930. When he was 10 he began driving horses on that sprayer.

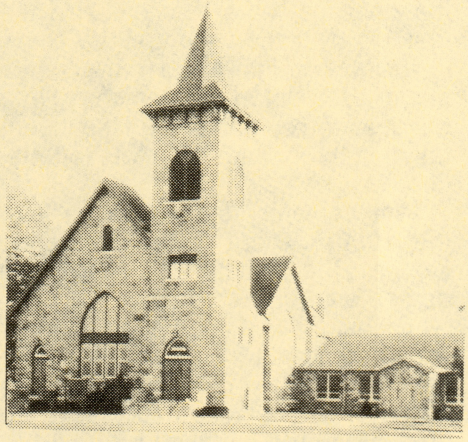
About the time he got married, they took the sprayer off the old steel wheel wagon and put it on a rubber tired trailer. Then his wife drove the tractor and he was on top doing the spraying.

"Sometime in the 1960s we bought our air blast sprayer, a faster one-man operation," he said.

The Albers passed out business brochures and a sheet tracing the owners of their centennial farm property from when it was taken up from the government by Jason Gillet in 1832. John Alber bought it October 8, 1881.

They sell apples and cider from a salesroom at the farm and deliver cider to other outlets including local Kroger Stores.

The Raab farm at 11665 Bemis Road in Bridgewater Township was established in 1850 by Jacob Raab, Sr. The wood and stone house was built soon after with stone picked up on the farm.



Courtesy of Bethel Church

Bethel Church congregation in Freedom township is celebrating 150 years in 1990.

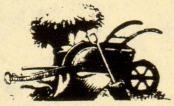
Part of the barn was built in the 1800s. In 1913 they stretched it out twice as long.

The farm came down from Jacob Senior through Jacob Junior, Theodore, Rolland to Ronald Raab. Ronald lives nearby in a new house.

The bus pulled in the drive back to the barns for a closer look and a view of Columbia Lake from which the farm is named "Lakeview Farm."

Rolland Raab, who became an accountant, told Ziegler he used to relax after a hard day just sitting there looking at the lake. Today house and fields are rented out.

There was a big article in Michigan History magazine, March/April 1990 about this farm.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

(continued from page 1)

year, we have learned that things hardly ever go smoothly!) it might be possible a year from this fall, September 1991, to be opening our doors to all of you.

We have two Co-Chairmen to head our financial campaign, Cliff Sheldon and Dave Pollock. The fund-raising committee is working to develop campaign materials and a plan for raising the money we will need to successfully complete our project. They or I would welcome any creative thoughts you might have for fund-raising ideas.

Karen O'Neal
665-2242

WE GET QUESTIONS, DO READERS HAVE ANSWERS?

From time to time the Society gets requests for information that we are unable to answer. Do any of you know anything about:

- The Ypsilanti Hay Press Company?
- The Newton-Haggerty Ladder Company?
- The existence of a flag for Washtenaw County?

You may call Karen O'Neal 665-2242, Alice Ziegler, 663-8826 or any Board member.

FORD HERITAGE TRAIL OPEN OCTOBER 14

Part of the Ford Heritage Trail with sites in Washtenaw County will be open to visitors Sunday, October 14.

Wayne County Parks, Michigan Department of Transportation and the Henry Ford Estate--Fair Lane are developing three routes. The Yellow Tour features Ford-related landmarks in Detroit and Dearborn. The Green Tour features Village industry mills in the Rouge River Valley.

The Red Tour features village industry mills and other landmarks restored by Henry Ford in the Huron and Raisin River Valleys.

The Red Tour, with five Washtenaw sites, will kick-off October 14 at the Dundee Country Fair. Ford had village industry mills in Ypsilanti, Rawsonville, Saline, Manchester, Sharon Hollow and Milan.

FLOURING MILL OPENED

"The flouring mill of Thomas Birkett at Dexter will start up this week. This will be a fine thing for the village of Dexter. It will have a capacity of from 75 to 100 barrels per day. Nine sets of rollers have been put in and everything about the mill is the best that money could buy, no expense being spared in fitting it up."

Ann Arbor Courier, March 6, 1889.

CHAPMAN'S COUNTY HISTORY REPRINTED

The 1881 History of Washtenaw County is being reprinted by the Genealogical Society of Washtenaw in two volumes with index, at pre-publication price of $75 plus $8 shipping and tax, if ordered by October 31. Information: 483-1395.

HISTORIC HAPPENINGS INVOLVE:

VIDEO, BASKETS, FARM TOUR, BARN DANCE, PIG ROAST, CRAFT, QUILT SHOW

Chelsea Historical Society: Meet 7:30 p.m. second Monday at depot. September 12 program, show video of July 28 dedication of historic marker at depot.

Quilt show 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, September 15, at depot. Admission $1.

Dexter Society: 8 p.m. first Thursday at museum, 3443 Inverness. October 1, Paul Kleinschmidt will show his handmade model of the country school he attended and talk about it.

Museum open 1-3 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays. Basket exhibit, antique and collectible, to November.

Manchester Society: Now meet 7:30 p.m. third Tuesday at blacksmith shop, not Monday. September, election of officers.

Milan Society: 7:30 p.m. third Wednesday at Hack House, 775 County Street.

Northfield Society: Guided centennial farms bus tour tentatively 1 p.m. Saturday, October 20, from St. John Lutheran Church, 2945 East Northfield Church Road. Fee. Information: 996-0550 days, 665-8077.

Salem Society: Annual barn dance, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, September 22, 51828 Eight Mile Road, west of Napier.

Saline Society: 7 p.m. third Wednesday, Senior Center, 7605 North Maple Road.

Webster Society: Annual fall festival 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday, September 22, at Webster corners, Webster Church and Farrell Roads. Pig roast dinners 5-7 p.m. Luncheon 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Rummage sale, quilt show, country store, petting zoo, hayrides, antique tractors, entertainment.

Meet 7:45 p.m. 2nd Monday at homes. October 8, Wendell Heers will talk about "Art from Old Objects" at home of Marilyn and Dale Larson, 2886 West Joy Road.

Ypsilanti Society: Annual craft show, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, October 13 museum, 220 North Huron. Regular museum hours 2-4 p.m. Thursday, Saturday, Sunday. Archives open 9 a.m.-noon weekdays.

Annual meeting Sunday, September 16 at museum, with reports, election of four new board members.

KAREN O'NEAL HEADS 1990-91 SLATE

Karen O'Neal was re-elected president of the Washtenaw County Historical Society for 1990-91 at the annual meeting and may be reached at 665-2242.

Vice-president is Marilou Warner, 663-2017; recording secretary, Marty Evashevski, 761-5529; corresponding secretary, Barbara Mueller, 663-1118; and treasurer, Louisa Pieper, home 663-7782 or office, 996-3008.

Named to three-year terms were Robert Creal, Arthur French, Donald Smith, and Susan Wineberg.

Continuing on the board to 1992 are Lois Foyle, William Wallach, Pauline Walters and Esther Warzynski. Continuing in one-year terms are Elizabeth Dusseau, Lucille Fisher of Milan, and Alice Ziegler.

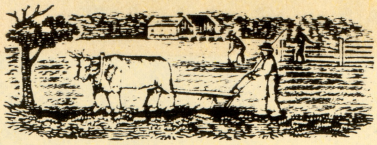
Nancy McKinney, chairman of the museum committee, is a newly appointed director-at-large. Other directors-at-large for the coming year are Patricia Austin, Rosemarion Blake, Marjorie Hepburn of Chelsea, Mary Jo Gord, Dave Pollock, Peter Rocco, Pam Tabba and Mary Jo Wholihan. All are of Ann Arbor except as noted.

DISPLAY CASE NEEDED

Needed urgently: at least one old glass and wood display case for WCHS exhibits. Must be in good shape, attractive design. Call Nancy McKinney, 665-5171, if you are willing to donate or sell one.

RURAL SCHOOLS WILL BE OCTOBER TOPIC

Wayne Clements, president of Saline Historical Society, will talk about county rural schools at the WCHS meeting at 2 p.m. Sunday, October 21. For location call Vice-president Marilou Warner, 663-2017.



DOLLHOUSE, CLOTHES, 'BONES' DONATED

An elaborate Victorian style doll house, some musical "bones" and early 20th century clothing have been given to WCHS by several donors, Elizabeth Dusseau reports.

Lewis Hodges who taught woodworking in Ann Arbor and elsewhere made the dollhouse and his wife made rugs, cushions, curtains and so on. Two books were given with it--*Building Antique Dollhouses* and *Master Craftsman*.

Percy Danforth who entertained at the annual meeting, playing musical bones, gave the society two pair, one of walnut, one of pine.

Dolly Gillett gave a long silk and lace dress and some printed matter. Elizabeth Groves gave several satin and lace formal gowns and other clothing items.

WCHS NEEDS HELP; FOUR WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- Someone to co-ordinate refreshments at meetings. We have some volunteers but we need a chairman to make it happen. Get the details from Marilou Warner 663-2017.
- Someone to channel a flow of interesting and unusual local historical tidbits to the new publication The Heart Of Ann Arbor. (These would be short one-to-three sentence fillers.) They have requested help with this every two months. Please call Karen O'Neal for more information 665-2242.
- Someone who would enjoy helping to create and set up small temporary exhibits. Currently we have a temporary exhibit of artifacts at City Hall. We have other spaces downtown where we could mount displays if we had a few more hands. Please call Nancy McKinney 661-5171.
- Someone who would be interested in decorating a Christmas tree for the Society in November. Please call Karen O'Neal for specifics, 665-2242.

FOR THE NICE THINGS PEOPLE DO FOR US, THANKS!

The following gifts of in-kind services, goods and helpful assistance are making history! Grateful thanks to everyone on this list!

The University of Michigan for their donation of the house and $5000.

The City of Ann Arbor, City Council, Department of Parks and Recreation, City Attorney's Office, Parks Advisory Commission, Ron Olson and Mel Laracey for leasing the land to us for an annual rent of $1 and for paying all of our building permit fees!

Karen Mendelson of Ellis, Talcott & Ohlgren for pro bono legal services.

Atwell-Hicks Inc. and Al Suggitt, for donating part of the cost of surveying the lot.

Mike Mehringer for donating the design for the "End of the Wall Street Journey" sign.

Milt Kemnitz for donating part of the cost of painting the sign.

Bill Lawrence, City Forester, for transplanting some of the original plantings around the house, and saving them until we are ready for final landscaping.

U-M Department of Communication, Mark Lohf and Colleen Sullivan for videotaping the house move.

Bob Wurtz for videotaping the house move from an unusual perspective, the 10th floor of Riverside Park Place.

O'Neal Construction, Gary Elling and Larry Darling for donation of construction services.

Kerrytown and Deborah deLorenzo for donation of a linden tree.

Steven Friend for assistance with temporary water and electricity at the site.

Marty Evashevski for use of her truck.

Susan Evashevski and Andrew O'Neal for moving services.

Katie Evashevski, Marty Evashevski, Nancy McKinney and Peter Rocco for salvaging 1000 of the original foundation bricks for use later on the house foundation.

Holnam Inc., Dundee Division, and Mark Von Weiss for donating cement for our foundation and sidewalks.

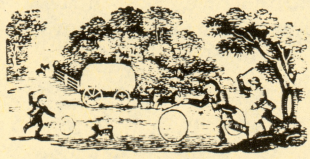
Bill Davis and Killins Concrete Company for contributing the concrete for our new basement, as well as for the sidewalks later.

Dave Peterson and Detroit Edison for mitigating some of our moving costs.

Columbia Cable, Jim Bowen, for helping with some of the moving costs.

Joan Pollock for contributing interesting short historical fillers for *The Heart Of Ann Arbor* this month.

Investall, Doug Ziesemer and Frank Sanchez, for donating an office space in the Goodyear Building to use for fund-raising.



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WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2:00 P.M. SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 1990

PARKER MILL

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